
DIGEST

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Henry

HB No. 303

Abstract: Provides relative to eligibility of students in state-approved home study programs to participate in interscholastic athletics at secondary schools that are members of the LHSAA. Provides guidelines, procedures, and limitations relative to such participation.

Proposed law provides (beginning with the 2010-2011 school year and continuing thereafter) that a student participating in a home study program approved by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) in accordance with R.S. 17:236.1 shall be eligible as follows to participate in interscholastic athletic activities at a secondary school that is a member of the Louisiana High School Athletic Association (LHSAA):

- (1) If seeking to participate at a public school that is a member of the association, provides that participation shall be in accordance with the provisions of proposed law.
- (2) If seeking to participate at a state-approved nonpublic school that is a member of the association, provides that participation shall be at the sole discretion of the principal of the school and only if the school has adopted standards and procedures for such participation that are substantially similar to those provided by proposed law.

Specifies that to be eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics as provided by proposed law, the home study student shall meet specified conditions and comply with other applicable provisions of proposed law.

Provides that the student shall be subject to the same residency or attendance zone requirements as other students participating in the athletic activity.

Requires that the student's participation be approved by the principal of the school providing the athletic activity.

Provides that the student's parent or legal guardian shall make a written request for the student to participate in interscholastic athletic activities to the principal of the school providing the activity. Requires that such request shall be made within the first 11 days of the school year.

Specifies that the principal of the school providing the athletic activity shall approve or disapprove such written request within 30 days after receipt by the principal of all information and documentation requested by the principal from the student or the student's parent or legal guardian, or both. Provides that a request for information and documentation by the principal

shall be limited to information and documentation that is required by proposed law and information and documentation that is required of other students relative to participation in the athletic activity.

Provides that a decision by the principal to approve or disapprove the written request for the student to participate shall be made in accordance with the provisions of proposed law and be based on the qualifications and requirements applicable to other students participating in the athletic activity, excluding any requirements relative to the student's enrollment in or attendance at the school, or both. Specifies that a decision by the principal to approve or disapprove a written request for the student to participate that is made in accordance with proposed law shall be final.

Provides that after a decision is made by the principal to approve a request for the student to participate, the student then shall participate in any try-outs for such activity at the same time and in the same manner as other students who want to participate in the same activity.

Specifies that at the time of participation in the athletic activity, the student and the student's home study program shall be in full compliance with all guidelines, standards, and requirements established by R.S. 17:236.1 for a home study program to be approved by the state. Requires the student to submit documentation from BESE that the student is in a home study program approved by the board.

Requires that the student meet academic standards required of other students to participate in the athletic activity.

Requires the student to submit a copy of his transcript showing units of study completed or in progress, the grades earned for such study, and his cumulative grade point average.

Provides that the student must meet all other standards and requirements applicable to a student participating in the athletic activity, including but not limited to try outs, practice time, codes of conduct and student discipline, physical exams, proof of age, permission forms, waivers, required paperwork, fees, and transportation arrangements but excluding any requirements that the student be enrolled in or attend the school, or both.

Requires the student to meet conditions applicable to students at the school relative to having any required insurance coverage either by participating, if otherwise eligible, in insurance programs offered through the school or school system or by providing for such insurance coverage in another manner.

Provides that a student who has been enrolled in a public or nonpublic school during the school year in which the student begins home study or during the previous school year and who was determined ineligible to participate in one or more interscholastic extracurricular activities at such school for reasons related to student conduct or academic performance, or both, shall be ineligible to participate in interscholastic athletic activities as provided by proposed law for one calendar year from the date the student was determined ineligible.

Specifies that a student who has been enrolled in a public or nonpublic school during the school year in which the student begins home study shall not be eligible to participate in interscholastic athletic activities as provided by proposed law during the remainder of that school year nor during the following school year.

Provides that any home study student who provides or on whose behalf others provide any false representation, documentation, or verification of the student's qualification for the purpose of meeting eligibility requirements to participate in interscholastic athletics shall be ruled ineligible to participate in accordance with policies of the LHSAA and shall be subject to the same penalties as other students as provided by the association.

Provides that a school determined to be knowledgeable of any false representation, documentation, or verification of a home study student's qualifications for the purpose of meeting eligibility requirements to participate in interscholastic athletics shall be subject to penalties as established by the LHSAA for use of an ineligible student athlete.

Effective upon signature of governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Adds R.S. 17:236.3)